

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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Israel: ITUC Condemns Massacre of Students

Brussels, 7 March 2008 (ITUC OnLine): The ITUC has condemned the killing of at least eight religious students in Jerusalem, and the wounding of several others, by an assassin on 6 March. Militant group Hamas has claimed responsibility for the attack.

"This atrocity is yet another link in the chain of violence and retribution, and we appeal to the Palestinian and Israeli authorities to do everything in their power to stop this, and return to serious and meaningful negotiations to bring about the peaceful co-existence of two sovereign states", said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder. "The Palestinian and Israeli trade unions, with the support of the entire world trade union movement, are ready and willing to play their part in bringing peace and economic and social development to Gaza and the West Bank, and the region as a whole", he added.

The killings, condemned by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, follow the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza earlier this week. The ITUC is also investigating the circumstances around the destruction by Israeli fighter jets on 28 February of a building in Gaza belonging to the ITUC Palestinian affiliate PGFTU.

"Our deepest sympathies go to all those affected by the violence in Palestine and Israel, and for the sake of all concerned the political leaders of the two sides, with the full support of the international community, must turn back from violence and follow the path to peace", Ryder said.

The ITUC represents 168 million workers in 155 countries and territories and has 311 national affiliates. Website: <http://www.ituc-csi.org>

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